

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1151

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO EGYPT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON ENGLAND

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT OMAN

AMEMBASSY SANAA YEMEN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN

AMEMBASSY TUNIS TUNISIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0231

E.O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : PFOR, BA

SUBJECT : ARAB DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS RESOLVE DHOFARI REBELLION

REF : (A) KUWAIT 1093; (B) TEHRAN 2276 (NOTAL);
(C) TUNIS 1904 (NOTAL); (D) BAGHDAD 190 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: BAHRAINI FOREIGN MINISTER SEES CURRENT DIPLOMATIC
MOVES AS HOLDING OUT PROMISE FOR SETTLING DHOFARI REBELLION
BY DIPLOMATIC MEANS. END SUMMARY

1. FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMMAD BIN MUBARAK TOLD CHARGE DURING
RECENT TALK THAT HIS AND OTHERS' SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS IN
GETTING REBELLION IN OMAN ON AGENDA OF LATEST ARAB FOREIGN
MINISTERS MEETING IN TUNIS WAS A PROMISING STEP FORWARD IN
FINDING A POLITICAL SOLUTION - A MILITARY SOLUTION NOT BEING
POSSIBLE, IN MOHAMMAD'S VIEW - TO THE GUERRILLA WAR IN
OMAN. NEXT STEP IS FOR COMMITTEE REPRESENTING FIVE ARAB
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COUNTRIES TO PROCEED TO SOUTH YEMEN AND OMAN TO STUDY ALL

ASPECTS OF SITUATION. COMMITTEE WILL DISABUSE SOUTH YEMENIS IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS OF DELUSION THEY HARBOR THAT THEIR AID TO DHOFARI REBELS SOMEHOW REPRESENTS THE ARAB NATIONAL WILL. IN FACT, MOHAMMAD STATED, SOUTH YEMENI SUPPORT FOR REBELS HAS CREATED A SITUATION OF GROWING DANGER IN WHICH OUTSIDERS (I.E. THE IRANIS) ARE BECOMING ENTRENCHED IN ARAB TERRITORY. COMMITTEE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO INIMATE TO SOUTH YEMENIS THAT IF THEY STOP THEIR ASSISTANCE TO DHOFAR REBELS, MORE MONEY WILL BE FORTHCOMING FROM ARAB SOURCES THAN SOUTH YEMEN NOW RECEIVES FROM SOVIET AND OTHER SOURCES.

2. FROM MOHAMMAD'S ACCOUNT, HE TALKED IN QUITE UNVARNISHED TERMS TO IRAQIS DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO BAGHDAD (BAGHDAD 190), ARGUING THAT IRAQI ACTIVITIES IN GULF WERE ONLY CREATING DISSENSION AMONG ARABS AND AROUSING LEGITIMATE IRANIAN FEARS ABOUT DANGERS OF SUBVERSION IN GULF AREA. DID THE IRAQIS NOT REALIZE THE IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT THEY WERE DOING? HE SAID HE TOLD IRAQIS THAT SHAH OF IRAN HAD NO DESIRE KEEP IRANIAN MILITARY FORCES IN OMAN BUT WAS DETERMINED TO PREVENT SUBVERSION FROM SUCCEEDING THERE, IF ARABS WOULD NOT HELP SULTAN QABOOS THEMSELVES. (COMMENT: THIS DEPICTION OF IRAN'S VIEWS AND INTENTIONS TOWARDS OMAN MAY REFLECT MOHAMMAD'S RECENT CONVERSATIONS IN TEHRAN - TEHRAN 2276).

3. IN RESPONSE TO CHARGE'S QUESTION, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE OMAN REBELLION WOULD COLLAPSE IF SOUTH YEMEN CUT OFF ITS SUPPORT. WAS HE EQUALLY CERTAIN THAT SOUTH YEMEN COULD BE PERSUADED TO STOP ITS AID? MOHAMMAD HEDGED, SAYING IF ASSURANCES HE HAD RECEIVED IN LAHORE FROM PDRY LEADERS (KUWAIT 1093) THAT SOUTH YEMEN IS NOT MARXIST AND IS NOT A SOVIET BASE, ARE TO BE BELIEVED, THEN THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THEY WILL STOP ASSISTING THE DHOFAR REBELS. IN ANY CASE, POLITICAL STEPS NOW BEING TAKEN REPRESENT A MORE HOPEFUL COURSE THAN TRAGIC - AND IN MOHAMMAD'S VIEW, FUTILE - MILITARY MEANS TRIED UP TO NOW. COMMENT: WITHOUT SAYING SO EXPLICITLY, BAHRAINI FOREIGN MINISTER LEFT IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS LISTEDED TO VERY SERIOUSLY IN BAGHDAD. IF THIS TURNS OUT INDEED TO BE THE

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CASE, FEAR OF IRAN INVOKED BY MOHAMMAD WOULD SEEM TO BE THE BASIC CAUSE.

VIEWS OF SAUDI ARABIA ON POLITICAL STEPS BY ARABS TO SETTLE OMANI WAR AGAIN WERE NOT EXPLICITLY STATED BY THEFOREIGN MINISTER. HOWEVER, IN VIEW BAHRAIN'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEPENDENCE ON SAUDI ARABIA, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT BAHRAIN WOULD SUPPORT STEPS TO REACH A POLITICAL SOLUTION IN OMAN IF IT BELIEVED SAUDIS WERE OPPOSED. ALSO,

INTIMATIONS ARAB LEAGUE COMMITTEE WILL LEAVE WITH SOUTH
YEMENIS THAT THEY WILL GET MORE MONEY BY STOPPING THEIR
SUPPORT TO DHOFARIS RATHER THAN PERSISTING IN PRESENT
COURSE, SUGGEST SAUDI SUPPORT OF CURRENT EFFORT.

WHATEVER THE ACTUAL CHANCES MAY BE THAT ARAB DIPLOMATIC
EFFORTS WILL SOLVE THE DHOFARI REBELLION, THE OBVIOUS
ENTHUSIASM OF THE ASTUTE BAHRAINI FOREIGN MINISTER FOR
CURRENT STEPS IS WORTH NOTING.

KILLGORE

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